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Message Text

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12
ACTION EB-11

INFO OCT-01 EA-11 ISO-00 AGR-20 SP-03 AID-20 NSC-07 RSC-01

CIEP-02 TRSE-00 SS-20 STR-08 OMB-01 CEA-02 CIAE-00

COME-00 FRB-02 INR-10 NSAE-00 XMB-07 OPIC-12 LAB-06

SIL-01 PA-04 PRS-01 USIA-15 DRC-01 /166 W
---------- 103223
P 210817Z MAY 74
FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1994

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: ETRD, JA
SUBJECT: U.S. LOGS: JAPAN VOLUNTARY IMPORT RESTRAINTS

SUMMARY: ACTION REQUESTED--EMBASSY WOULD APPRECIATE CLARI-
FICATION USG POSITION RE DESIRABILITY JAPAN CONTINUING
VOLUNTARY RESTRAINTS ON IMPORTS U.S. LOGS BEYOND JUNE 30.
REPLY REQUESTED ASAP TO ENABLE EMBASSY TO REPORT TO MITI
PRIOR TO MAY 23 MEETING DESCRIBED PARA 2. END SUMMARY.

1. MITI INFORMED EMBOFF THAT STR'S MATHIASON (SIC) HAD
APPROACHED OFFICIAL FROM JAPANESE EMBASSY IN WASHINGTON
(POSSIBLY FORESTRY AGENCY REP., MATSUOKA) INDICATING THAT
HE UNDER INSTRUCTIONS FROM AMB. EBERLE TO ADVISE GOJ THAT
US WISHES JAPAN VOLUNTARY RESTRAINTS ON IMPORTS U.S. LOGS
EXTENDED BEYOND JUNE 30. THIS NEW APPROACH
CONTRARY TO GOJ UNDERSTANDING, BASED ON APRIL CONVERSATIONS
BETWEEN SAITO, CHIEF 2ND NORTH AMERICAN DIVISION, FONOFF,
AND AMBASSADOR MALMGREN AND SHERMAN (EA/J), THAT USG NOT
RPT NOT INTERESTED IN PROLONGING RESTRAINTS. ACCORDING
MITI, MATHIASON STATED CONTINUED VOLUNTARY RESTRAINTS
NEEDED IN PRESENT POLITICAL ATMOSPHERE.

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2. MITI HAS REQUESTED CLARIFICATION U.S. POSITION ASAP

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BECAUSE GOJ PREPARATIONS FOR DISMANTLING RESTRAINT SYSTEM UNDERWAY. MEETING SCHEDULED MAY 23 BETWEEN MITI OFFICIALS AND DIET MEMBERS WHO HAVE SUBMITTED REQUEST THAT RESTRAINTS BE CONTINUED. MITI HAD PLANNED TO URGE DIETMEN'S GROUP TO WITHDRAW REQUEST.

3. FONOFF, MITI AND FORESTRY AGENCY IN AGREEMENT THAT, WITH SHIPMENTS NOW 10-15 PERCENT BELOW RESTRAINT LEVELS AND WYATT ACT IN EFFECT, VOLUNTARY RESTRAINTS NO LONGER USEFUL ECONOMICALLY OR POLITICALY AND THAT CONTINUING THEM UNDER THESE CIRCUMSTANCES MIGHT SET UNDESIRABLE PRECEDENT.
MITI REP STATED TO EMBOFF THAT GOJ WOULD COOPERATE FULLY IN REIMPOSING VOLUNTARY RESTRAINTS IF NECESSARY AT SOME TIME IN FUTURE. HOWEVER, HE STRESSED THAT ABRUPT POLICY SHIFT BY U.S. (I.E. AWAY FROM THAT STATED BY MALMGREN AND SHERMAN) AT THIS POINT WOULD CAUSE GOJ DIFFICULTY IN DEALING WITH PRO-RESTRAINT DIETMEN'S GROUP WHICH MITI REP. DESCRIBED AS SMALL BUT VOCAL.

4. COMMENT: DIETMEN'S GROUP MAY BE RESPONDING TO PRESSURES FROM LUMBER INTERESTS WHICH BELIEVE RESTRAINTS HELPING TO PROTECT PRICE LEVELS AND TO CONTROL OVERSUPPLY IN PRESENT DEPRESSED MARKET.

5. ACTION REQUESTED: PLEASE ADVISE U.S. POSITION ON THIS MATTER ASAP, AT LATEST BY COB WASHINGTON MAY 22 IN ORDER FOR EMBASSY TO RESPOND TO MITI REQUEST FOR CLARIFICATION.
SHOESMITH

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